Notes AGM

Annual General Meeting to be held at Shrublands Club, 20A Laurel Close, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6QE on 19th January 2023 at 7.30pm

**LB I would like to request that we get through the agenda and then hand over to the floor for debate, questions, ideas, and suggestions. – all agreed? Yes.**

**Apologies for absence**

Ian Jarome, we will cover points he wants to raise later in the meeting.

LB Minutes of previous AGM updates provided as

* Update on the ramp into Tilgate.
* After looking at the costs of the notice board it was felt that the money would be better spent on the website and maintenance of the estate, therefore the idea was shelved for now.
* There was an increase in the Maintenance fees of inflation (normal increase amount) plus £14 work from the Currey and brown report has started on Highdown.
* The bed has been emptied a new membrane put in place and new weep holes. This has meant that more water than ever is draining by this route. However as discussed previously the report suggests 250k per court is required with no guarantee that this will make them watertight. There is also the continuing confusion over who is responsible for what.
* This has led to aggressive emails being sent to the board which the board feel are not acceptable to us especially as we are a volunteer board for an charity organisation which they are residents in themselves This are not acceptable or helpful. Later in the meeting we wish to propose two votes on this topic.
* We have been liaising with the golf course and have now had some success in holding them to account in relation to trimming of trees that lean into the estate. They have agreed to trim some of the worse ones providing permission is given by CBC. In addition they have agreed that we can trim some of the smaller bushes and trees and the gardeners have completed this work in Highdown and will be working on other courts over the next few weeks/months.
* We will talk about debtors in the finance section.

**Are we approving the Notes. Show of hands approved last AGM notes.**

3. Chair’s/ Secretary’s report

These roles still remain empty however the following points were shared by Lindsey Beer;

* Annette Gidman, one of the long-standing directors resigned as she were moving off the estate so far no one has come forward to replace we currently now have only four directors. However, I pleased to say that we have added two residents to our volunteer pool this year who have been helping us. Martyn and Kim who along with Pam and Graham give their time to help us around the estate and with administration.
* The Committee have re contracted for gardening services and obtained a wider range of services in the contract and a saving from the previous incumbent. They are currently focused on the removal of the moss around the estate this will enable spraying to help keep the moss at bay.
* The committee has revisited all the insurances we hold and managed to obtain lower quotes for the same cover.
* The committee is in the process of re contracting for financial accountant support to reduce the cost for residents. Our current provider has been supporting this.
* The Easter and Halloween trails for families have been very well received as has the painting of the bird boxes which was oversubscribed, these will be put up on the estate shortly. We will continue to develop this to make sure we are making this a great place to live. Any ideas for future events will be welcome.
* We have been where possible moving plants around the estate to reduce the cost of new plants. In addition Pam has been very focused on identifying special deals to make sure the planting cost is minimised. I am pleased to say they we have again planted additional bulbs around the estate which I think will add colour at low cost and be attractive for both the residents and any prospective residents looking to buy here.
* The new website is up and running. I would like to say thank you to Megan who did all the design work herself for free and we managed to obtain a small reduction in the hosting costs. Megan did this whilst running her own business and giving birth to a beautiful baby girl.
* We are having problems with the email account which we understand has been very frustrating for some residents. This will be the next thing to be addressed.

5. Financial report

LB advised as at the last AGM, we have no financial director on the board, but as previously advised we have been receiving more support from our accountants. They have been helping us find a more cost-effective provider given our increased requirements for support as the current organisation is expensive given the additional services we require.

The summary report confirms that in line with discussion at the last AGM we have been dipping into the reserves to carry out remedial work around the estate including the final car parking spaces and repointing. In addition, many of the lights managed by us have needed replacing and these are being changed to ensure that they will work for the forcible future.

In addition, we have cleared drains, repaired and replaced fencing as well employed tree surgeons to reduce the size of the trees on the estate as requested by residents.

As discussed previously there are a small number of residents who now owe more than one year’s fees. The board would like to take these individuals to the small claims court. This has never been taken forward as an option by previous boards as three of the residents owe money from before most of the current board members were elected. Currently we are seeing an increase in the number of residents who have not yet paid the fees from September. Reminders have been issued but we have had some feedback that the reminders are too aggressive, and we have taken this feedback on board and have adjusted the wording. We would like to propose a vote this evening on this at the end of the formal part of this evening before we open to the floor.

7. Election of Directors

As required two directors are required to stand down, both Carolyn and I have agreed to step down but are prepared to stand again. Can I have a show of hands to confirm if you are happy to re-elect us.

**Lindsey and Carolyn both re-elected by a show of hands.**

Voting forms handed out for three things that we would like residents to vote on. We will then count the votes and include the decisions in the notes that will be distributed on face book and the website shortly after the meeting. We would ask you to vote at the end of the meeting and hand in your folded voting forms as you leave. This will enable any matters to be discussed to be raised before votes are held.

Vote one

The board would like the residents to agree to pay for legal advice for an opinion on the roles and responsibilities in relation to the garages. This will include a simple explanation of the Forestfield Management Company. We believe that this will help or residents and whilst all legal opinions can be challenged we think it would be helpful. In addition, it is a prerequisite for any significant increase in charges in relation to significant escalation in repairs.

Vote two

The board feels that it’s now in an intolerable position in relation to this matter with accusations that the work in Highdown has been a waste of time despite it being recommended in the curry and brown report and before the unseasonable storms and rain was showing to have made an improvement. There was much debate about the need to start doing some of the work at the last AGM. The intention was to carry out the same work in Nyman’s in the spring as Highdown and then Nyman’s were identified by the residents to be the two most affected by flooding.

The vote is to continue as planned or not.

Vote 3

Finally, we would like to ask residents if they are prepared to pay for legal advice through the small claims portable (fixed price) to support this activity for the five residents who own in excess of 650. After which we would hopefully be able to do this for other non-payers ourselves by not letting the debt build up over time. These five owe more than £7000. This would be a last resort activity.

Agreed that residents would vote after the floor was opened up to discuss everything.

Ian’s – points

Residents in Leonardslee have been working by their garages or clearing things out - could we remind people to make sure they sweep up after themselves as this has resulted in three expensive repairs and a new tyre.

John Burns has asked for a breakdown of spending on the car parking spaces and garage maintenance Lindsay Beer advised that 13 spaces have been added, this was the most complained problem from residents since the parking spaces have been completed the board has received no complaints on parking.

Lindsey said that the board is caught in a difficult situation of situations that are historic, for many years. And this relates mainly to garages. A vote will be taken on next steps.

Janis Wilson raised a question of her flooded garage and damaged items it was discussed that this is due to the torrential rain and that it was recognised that the water was draining much more freely out the weep holes that have been added to Highdown.

In the past there have been discussions on how much it would cost to repair the leakage + a figure of 250,000 per court had been put forward at a previous AGM. There was a vote that agreed that this could not be funded It is felt that this is too much to consider residents fund.

John Barson 21 Batemans court mentioned a report dated from 2016 regarding the membrane problems. He also raised the fact that some of the weepholes draining from the planting bed & did not seem to have water draining from them. Mark Hayward mentioned a previous report regarding the bungalow Gardens (+ he feels somewhat cynical that the report was looking at a lot of expensive work-and not at all necessary)

Jacquie Rosie related some issues relating to her bungalow where she has fitted different pavers etc as part of an investigation of standing water or residual water "the water has to go somewhere eventually".

Roy Caller mentioned membranes in the ramps going up to the bungalows were replaced some 16 years ago. Lady raised a question of the cost digging out the Highdown flower bed - graham and Lindsey advises a figure of approximately 11,000 pounds.

Mr Hayward asked if a correlation between the ramps and the end garages being the worse effected.

Maureen Green said that there used to be a letter sent to residents if their properties were falling below a minimum standard of appearance etc. LB confirmed that this was in part why the board wanted legal advice to make this possible.

Other residents confirmed that the garages had been the same for 40 years and that there was no real answer to the problem and that they are free hold of house includes the garage making it the responsibility of the resident or owner of the property to sort out.

Resident attending the meeting were invited to vote on several key questions as described on the form.

Results

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes | No |
| **Vote 1**  Do you approve the board to spend funds to obtain legal advice on the roles and responsibilities in relation to the garages? To include where possible a simple explanation of the Forrestfield Management Company. | 27 | 3 |
| **Vote 2**  Do you approve the board emptying the Nyman’s bed replacing the membrane and putting in place new weep holes? | 16 | 15 |
| **Vote 3**  Do you approve the board’s request to pay for legal advice through the small claims portable (fixed price) to support claiming the unpaid debt for the five residents who owe in excess of £650 | 30 | 1 |

Not all residents choose to vote. One blank on Vote 1.

No new business - meeting closed at 9:30pm.